Berkshire Museum presents Jeff Roberts in a concert of traditional Chinese music

[PITTSFIELD, MA] – Composer and sound artist Jeff Roberts will present a concert of music performed on the guqin (a traditional Chinese instrument) on Saturday, May 30, at 2 p.m. at the Berkshire Museum. The special performance is offered in conjunction with the new exhibition Immortal Present: Art and East Asia, on view May 23 through September 7, 2015. The performance is included with regular Museum admission.

The concert, titled Echoes of Spontaneity: Bridging the West, East, Traditional and Modern in the Guqin Tradition, will be performed in the galleries of Immortal Present, where the musician and the audience can be surrounded by the beauty of the Asian art on display. The guqin, a seven-stringed instrument similar to a zither, is China’s oldest stringed instrument, dating back some 3,000 years. In this concert, Roberts will present a collection of music for guqin ranging from traditional repertoire to modern Western composition, improvisation and technology. Working with both Chinese and Western music and aesthetic languages, Roberts hopes to create a ‘middle way’ in his guqin performance, reflecting both balance and co-existence of Chinese and American cultures.

About Jeff Roberts
Currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Williams College, Jeff Roberts is a composer-improviser and sound artist working in interdisciplinary acoustic and electroacoustic contexts. His music explores relationships between different music styles.
and cultures. Rooted in his studies on guqin as a 2006 China Fulbright Fellow, studying with guqin master Li Xiangting, Roberts’ work also involves integrating East Asian and Western instruments in the context of composition and improvisation. His compositions have been performed by numerous ensembles in festivals in the US, Europe and China and has received commissions from ensembles in the US and Europe. As a performer, he has presented solo guqin improvisation recitals in the US, Europe and China. He recently co-founded the 'East Asian Improvisation Ensemble' with Korean Piri master Gamin.

**About Immortal Present**

Illuminating the rich and diverse legacy of Asian art, *Immortal Present: Art and East Asia* highlights the Berkshire Museum’s historic collection of art from China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia, and showcases works by a number of significant and influential artists with ties to Asia. Splendid objects from scroll paintings, sculptures, netsuke, and prints to folding screens and fans range in date from 600 B.C.E. to the twentieth century; and exciting, ground-breaking works by contemporary artists include sculpture, photography, video, mixed media, and painting. Visitors will spark connections between magnificent historic pieces and compelling new artwork, while exploring the distinctive aesthetics, ideas, and traditions embodied by diverse Asian cultures.

**About the Berkshire Museum**

Located in downtown Pittsfield, Massachusetts, at 39 South St., the Berkshire Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate, is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is $13 adult, $6 child; Museum members and children age 3 and under enjoy free admission. For more information, visit www.berkshiremuseum.org or call 413.443.7171.

In association with the Smithsonian since 2013, Berkshire Museum is part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian's resources with the nation.
Established by Zenas Crane in 1903, Berkshire Museum integrates art, history, and natural science in a wide range of programs and exhibitions that inspire educational connections between the disciplines. *Immortal Present: Art and East Asia* is on view through September 7, 2015. *Objectify: A Look into the Permanent Collection* is currently on view. Little Cinema is open year-round. Spark!Lab, Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

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